

REMARKS

Claims 1-13, all the claims pending in the Application, are rejected. Claim 1 is amended.
New claim 14 is added.

Claim 1 is amended to expressly identify the existence of “individual reels” and to clearly state that each observation window is associated with different parts of an individual reel, so that the structure as illustrated in Figs. 1 and 2, showing windows 5a and 7a for revealing different parts of the same individual reel, is reflected in the claim language.

New claim 14 is drafted to expressly specify that there are plural windows and that each window displays a respective one part out of plural parts of a given individual reel. This language also is supported by Figs. 1 and 2 and the supporting disclosure at pages 8 and 9 of the original specification.

Interview

Applicants wish to express their appreciation to the Examiner for the courtesy extended to Applicant’s representative during an interview conducted on May 10, 2011 during which the language of claim 1 was discussed and the inapplicability of that language to the prior art was explained. Alternative language as reflected in claim 14 also was discussed. The Examiner’s Interview Summary dated May 16, 2011 accurately reflects the discussion and the outcome of the interview. Applicants have amended claim 1 to state the existence of plural windows for each individual reel, so that the claim distinguishes from a single window per reel, as in the prior art.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 102

Claims 1-3 are rejected as being anticipated by Kinoshita et al (JP 6-105943). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Claim 1

The invention of independent claim 1, with reference to the illustration in Figs. 1 and 2 by way of example but without limitation thereto, is directed to a gaming machine (1) having a plurality of reels (3a, 3b, 3c), each of which variably presents a plurality of symbols (main symbols and sub-symbols - at page 8), and a **cover body** (2), covering the reels (3a, 3b, 3c) and formed with a plurality of observation windows (5a, 7a), each of which is associated with one of different parts in each of the reels. The claim also requires a controller that is operative to “exclusively allow one of the different parts in each of the reels to be viewed through an associated one of the plurality of observation windows.”

As explained by Applicants in the Amendment filed on December 9, 2009, the language describing the cover body was intended “to clarify that: i) each of the observation windows is associated with one of different parts in each of the reels; and ii) the controller is operable to exclusively allow one of the different parts in each of the reels to be viewed through an associated one of the observation windows in accordance with the condition of the game.

The language of claim 1 clearly requires plural windows to be related to a given reel, and further requires an exclusive display of one part of a given reel in one window while another part of that reel is displayed in another window.

Applicants have amended claim 1 to further emphasize the existence of plural windows for each individual reel, so that the claim distinguishes from a single window per reel, as in the prior art.

Kinoshita et al

In framing the rejection of claim 1 as being anticipated by Kinoshita (JP 6-105943), the Examiner points to the limitation for “a cover body, covering the reels and formed with a plurality of observation windows, each of which is associated with one of different parts in each of the reels,” and comments at page 3 of the Office Action that “The Examiner interprets the game cabinet as the cover body and each individual reel as an observation window.”

On the basis of the language in the claim, the supporting disclosure in the specification and the Applicants comments in the previous Amendment filed on December 9, 2009, such interpretation cannot be correct.

The claim requires each window to be associated with “one of different parts in each of the reels.” Clearly, this means a different window for a respective one of plural parts in a given reel. Kinoshita merely teaches one window per reel, not plural windows per reel.

Further, the claimed controller (1) exclusively allow (2) one of the different parts (3) in each of the reels to be viewed through (4) an associated one of the plurality of observation windows in accordance with a condition of the game.

Given this proper reading of the claim, claim 1 cannot be anticipated. Applicants respectfully submit that the language cannot be read to cover a single separate window for each reel.

For similar reasons, dependent claims 2 and 3 cannot be anticipated.

Claim Rejections - 35 U.S.C. § 103

Claims 7-11 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinoshita et al. (JP 6-105943) in view of JP 2001-054612 (hereinafter JP ‘612). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Kinoshita et al

The reference already has been distinguished from parent claim 1 on the basis of the limitations directed to the window and controller limitations.

JP ‘612

This reference is cited for a teaching of both a “regular bonus game and a big bonus game” as set forth in claims 7 and 8, as well as the illumination of UV light during a bonus game in claim 9, a maximum number of bonus games in claim 10, and a UV lighted symbols around a reel periphery with regard to claim 11.

Without addressing the foregoing assertions of the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that on a fundamental level, JP ‘612 does not remedy the deficiencies of Kinoshita et al with regard to the cover with plural windows for a given reel and the controller operation, as claimed in claim 1. Thus, these claims would be patentable because of their dependency from allowable claim 1.

Claims 4-6 and 13 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as allegedly being unpatentable over Kinoshita et al. (Japanese Patent Application 6-105943) in view of JP 2002-200243 (hereinafter JP ‘243). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Kinoshita et al

The reference already has been distinguished from parent claim 1 on the basis of the limitations directed to the window and controller limitations.

JP ‘243

This reference is cited for a teaching of a mirror, concave mirror or half mirror, added paylines, an inverted display, and reduced lighting.

Without addressing the foregoing assertions of the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that on a fundamental level, JP ‘243 does not remedy the deficiencies of Kinoshita et al with regard to the cover with plural windows for a given reel and the controller operation, as claimed in claim 1. Thus, these claims would be patentable because of their dependency from allowable claim 1.

Claim 12 is rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) as being unpatentable over Kinoshita et al and JP ‘612, and further in view of Dickenson et al. (US 5,251,898). This rejection is traversed for at least the following reasons.

Kinoshita et al

The reference already has been distinguished from parent claim 1 on the basis of the limitations directed to the window and controller limitations.

JP '612

The reference already has been distinguished from parent claim 1 on the basis of the limitations directed to the window and controller limitations.

Dickinson

This reference is cited for a teaching of bi-directional reels that can reversely rotate.

Without addressing the foregoing assertions of the Examiner, Applicants respectfully submit that on a fundamental level, Dickinson does not remedy the deficiencies of Kinoshita et al with regard to the cover with plural windows for a given reel and the controller operation, as claimed in claim 1. Thus, these claims would be patentable because of their dependency from allowable claim 1.

New Claim

Applicants have added a new independent claim 14 that defines the use of plural windows for each given reel in even greater detail.

Conclusion

In view of the above, reconsideration and allowance of this application are now believed to be in order, and such actions are hereby solicited. If any points remain in issue which the Examiner feels may be best resolved through a personal or telephone interview, the Examiner is kindly requested to contact the undersigned at the telephone number listed below.

The USPTO is directed and authorized to charge all required fees, except for the Issue Fee and the Publication Fee, to Deposit Account No. 19-4880. Please also credit any overpayments to said Deposit Account.

Respectfully submitted,

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